

## SHORT TAKES

◆ Service is now available between the Oakland Amtrak Station in Jack London Square and Oakland International Airport. AC Transit Bus Line A is a limited stop express. It operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week—every 30 minutes between 6 am and Midnight and every hour between Midnight and 6 am. Fare is \$1.35.

◆ The Amtrak Campus Visit Program encourages high school students and their parents to use the train when making college campus visits. A coupon for 50% off the lowest available fare for one student and two parents or guardians is available through High School Counselors, College Admissions Offices and Deans of Student Affairs.

◆ A new educational program at the Sacramento Railroad Museum, known as the School Train, begins this year on April 3. School groups may ride aboard the Museum's Sacramento Southern Railroad on Tuesdays and Fridays. For just \$3 per person, school groups are given a train ride, a guided tour of the Central Pacific Railroad Passenger Station and a California Operation Lifesaver safety presentation. Other tour options include an IMAX theater experience. For more information and reservations call Becky Brown at 916/322-8485.

◆ School groups can take San Joaquin trains to their favorite field trip destination at a special low fare. Students learn how a train operates and the role of railroads in California's history. They also learn why it is important to use caution and behave safely around train equipment and facilities. For information on the school field trip program, call the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) at 916/654-5928.



## HOTEL UPGRADE FOR AMTRAK PASSENGERS

*Pacific Surfliner* passengers can receive a complimentary room upgrade at several hotels in three cities at the north end of the route. Passengers must present their ticket stub at the time of check-in, and the room upgrade is based upon availability. The trip on the train and room upgrade makes a perfect mid-week or weekend getaway. Passengers should contact the hotel directly for details and reservations. **The promotion runs through March 31, 2001 and holiday blackout dates apply.**

### • Oxnard

At *Country Inn and Suites by Carlson* enjoy a cozy stay two blocks from the Port Hueneme beach. A short cab ride (about five miles) takes you to and from the train station. There is a daily complimentary breakfast and a heated pool and spa. **1-800-456-4000**

*The Radisson Hotel* offers a shuttle pick-up to and from the Oxnard Amtrak Station. Restaurant, lounge, outdoor heated pool, spa and fitness center are available on site. **1-800-333-3333**

### • Ventura

*Bella Maggiore Inn* is located in downtown Ventura three blocks from the beach and four blocks from the Amtrak Station. The 24 rooms are furnished in a distinctive Mediterranean style. **1-800-523-8479**

### • Solvang

A connecting Amtrak Thruway Motorcoach takes passengers from the Santa Barbara Amtrak Station to picturesque Solvang in the Santa Inez Valley. The five hotels are within walking distance of the Amtrak Thruway Motorcoach Bus stop.

*Best Western King Frederik* is located next the Amtrak Thruway Motorcoach stop in the heart of town and close to restaurants, shops and one-quarter block from Theatrefest. **1-800-549-9955**

*Best Western Kronborg Inn*, four blocks from the Motorcoach stop, offers 38 spacious rooms with upstairs balconies and downstairs patios located around a sunny courtyard with pool and spa. **1-800-788-8932**

At *Country Inn & Suites by Carlson* guests enjoy a complimentary breakfast and the manager's afternoon reception. There is a heated pool and spa at this Inn, located three blocks from the Motorcoach stop. **1-800-456-4000**

*Royal Scandinavian Inn*, located four blocks from the Motorcoach stop, has 133 spacious accommodations, many with panoramic views and balconies. There is a Danish restaurant, lounge, room service, heated pool and spa. **1-800-624-5572**

*Svendsgaard's Danish Lodge*, just two blocks from the Motorcoach stop, has 38 rooms, many with fireplaces. Daily continental breakfast, heated pool and spa are available. **1-800-733-8757**



## RAIDERS FANS TAKE TRAIN TO GAME

Oakland Raiders legend Marv Hubbard and Oakland Raiderettes sign autographs and distribute Amtrak California posters for fans in Modesto. During football season a special Motorcoach shuttle takes passengers from the Oakland Amtrak Station to the Oakland Coliseum and return.



# Making Tracks

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## Amtrak Guest Rewards Program

Amtrak has announced a Guest Rewards Program allowing passengers to earn points for every dollar spent on Amtrak trips. Rather than a reward program based on miles traveled, the Amtrak passengers will earn two points for every dollar spent on their rail ticket.

The Amtrak Guest Rewards Program is the most flexible in the travel industry. Those who sign up for membership in the Program can redeem points for free Amtrak train trips, airline flights, hotel stays, retail merchandise and other rewards from Amtrak's partners in the Rewards Program.

Among the partners are United and Continental Airlines, Hilton, Westin, Sheraton, Four Points, and Marriott hotels, Hertz car rentals, Macy's, Bloomingdale's, Eddie Bauer and Barnes & Noble Booksellers.

The Program is designed to encourage passengers to choose Amtrak when making business or leisure travel plans.

To enroll in the program, passengers should visit the Amtrak Web-site at [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com). They will receive a 500-point bonus to get started. Guests also may enroll by telephone at 1-800-307-5000 and receive a 400-point bonus.



Irma Garcia, a Spanish-speaking reservationist is on duty at the Amtrak Reservation Center. Passengers can reach her and other Spanish-speaking reservationists by calling 1-800-USA-RAIL.

## 1-800-USA-RAIL *En Español*

Amtrak passengers may now obtain information in Spanish on Amtrak routes, schedules and fares by calling the Amtrak toll-free 800-number: 1-800-USA-RAIL.

By using the new services recently added to the ticket-reservation system, passengers will be given the option of obtaining information in either English or Spanish. In addition to recorded information on passenger train routes, schedules, fares and up-to-the-minute arrival and departure times for that day, passengers may speak to an Amtrak reservationist in either language.

Callers will receive a greeting in both English and Spanish, and will be prompted to press 1 (on a touch tone phone) for English and to press 2 for Spanish. Several options will be given, including press 0 to speak to an agent.

At the present time, the Spanish-speaking option is only available to callers from California area codes. The service

will be expanded to Southwest states, Florida and New York, and then nationwide.

The option of Amtrak information in Spanish was implemented in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans.)



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Transportation  
Jeff Morales, Director



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Address your comments to: Marketing, Caltrans Rail Program, MS-74, Box 942874, Sacramento, CA 94274-0001



# A GRAND MERCED STATION

The new Amtrak Station in Merced has incorporated elements from its historic past to make it a showplace in the Central Valley community. Built on the site of the original Merced Station, which dates back to 1896, the new station includes the original building sign and the hand-cut corbels that support it on the West Side of the station. An original light standard, donated by the Bruce Huntoon family of Merced, was placed inside the station building.

Merced Amtrak Station includes an Amtrak ticket office, baggage handling facilities and a waiting room with seats for 60. Ten daily *San Joaquin* trains serve the facility. Four northbound trains go to the San Francisco/Oakland Bay Area and one to Sacramento. Four southbound trains arrive from the Bay Area and one from Sacramento and travel on through the Central Valley to Bakersfield as their final destination. Amtrak Thruway Motorcoaches connect *San Joaquin* passengers with many destinations in Southern California and Northern California.



Merced is the gateway to Yosemite National Park with the connection to VIA Bus Lines.

The Merced Station has three bus bays and a bus turnaround for VIA Bus Lines, the Amtrak connection to Yosemite National Park. City of Merced operates 54 buses on seven routes from the station. The parking lot has space for 50 automobiles.

Funding for the new station came from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Amtrak supervised the construction. Architects for the station project were DuPertuis Scott Architects, of Merced, and the general contractor was Tech Four Construction, of Fresno.

The new Merced Amtrak Station includes a waiting room for 60, a ticket office and baggage handling facilities, and parking for 50 automobiles.



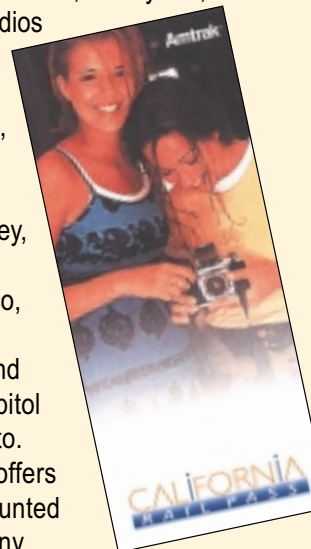
## CALIFORNIA RAIL PASS

Amtrak has introduced the new California Rail Pass, which links all Amtrak services in the state with just one ticket. It's a new way for passengers to explore California on a single ticket.

With the flexible "Eurail" style of travel, Amtrak passengers have unlimited travel within California any seven days within a 21-day period for \$159 (\$80 for children). The pass is good on *Pacific Surfliner*, *San Joaquin*, *Capitol Corridor* and *Coast Starlight* (within California only) trains and all connecting Amtrak Thruway Motorcoaches. Also available are Northern California and Southern California passes, which allow five days of travel within a seven-day period for only \$99 (\$50 for children). These passes are good for travel on all California trains and Motorcoaches, except the *Coast Starlight*.

The flexibility of the California Rail Pass means passengers can decide when to get on and off the trains as they visit many of California's attractions. Amtrak passengers can easily visit Sea World, Disneyland, Universal Studios Hollywood, Yosemite National Park, Marine World Africa USA, the Napa Valley, Lake Tahoe, San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego and the State Capitol in Sacramento. Amtrak also offers special discounted tickets to many California attractions and special packages to destinations.

Passes may be purchased at Amtrak staffed stations, by calling 1-800-USA-RAIL, or through local travel agents.



## New Motorcoach Stop in Palm Springs



Palm Springs Mayor William G. Kleindienst (center) cuts the ribbon to inaugurate a new Amtrak Thruway Motorcoach stop at the Palm Springs International Airport. With him are William Weaver (left), Airport Ground Transportation Manager, and Kathy Sanders, Amtrak Bus Coordinator. A daily Amtrak motorcoach leaves Palm Springs at 9:55 a.m. to connect with a San Joaquin train in Bakersfield for the trip north through the Central Valley to the San Francisco/Oakland Bay Area. The return motorcoach from the southbound train arrives in Palm Springs at 7:00 p.m.

Amtrak California Thruway Motorcoaches now stop in the Bus Loading Area at the north end of the Airport Loop Road about 75 yards past the Palm Springs International Airport Terminal Building. The former location was at the Sun Bus Stop, Indian

train #717. Northbound from Bakersfield, the train stops in Wasco, Corcoran, Hanford, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Turlock/Denair, Modesto, Stockton, Antioch, Martinez, Richmond, Emeryville (connecting point for San Francisco) and Oakland.

Canyon Drive at Amado Road.

Amtrak California offers a direct, comfortable and reliable connection to Palm Springs by Thruway Motorcoach from *San Joaquin* trains in Bakersfield. The daily motorcoach from *San Joaquin* #712 arrives in Palm Springs at 7:00 p.m. The return Motorcoach leaves Palm Springs Airport at 9:55 a.m. to connect with *San Joaquin*

Reservations are required on *San Joaquin* trains. Passengers may make a reservation and purchase a ticket for the bus and train from a local travel agent or call Amtrak at 1-800-USA-RAIL.

With a warm and dry climate during the day and cool evenings, Palm Springs is a vacation paradise, business getaway and a great place to play. There is golfing at more than 100 courses in the Valley, polo at the Eldorado and Empire Polo clubs, tennis, swimming, hiking, horseback riding and relaxing at a spa. There is shopping at fine department stores, designer boutiques and specialty shops. Then relax at the pool before choosing a place for dinner—from chic bistros to exclusive French-service restaurants to family-style eateries. Art lovers will enjoy galleries exhibiting works by renowned artists and you'll want to visit the Air Museum and Desert Museum. And don't forget a ride on the Palm Springs Aerial Tram.

## LOCOMOTIVE SIMULATOR



Eagle Scout candidate Patrick Megeath (third from right) built a Locomotive Simulator and presented it to the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento for its Rail Safety Program. He is shown with his father, David, (left) construction assistants and Operation Lifesaver volunteers LeeAnn Preece (second from left) and Donna Jordan. (right). The hands-on simulator gives students and visitors the opportunity

to experience first-hand the job of a locomotive engineer. You follow a video-tape that shows from the engineer's perspective the dangers of pedestrians walking on railroad tracks in front of the train. The video also shows motor vehicles crossing tracks when the crossing gates are down and signals warn of an approaching train. Using simulator controls you try to stop the train in time to avoid a collision.

## SANTA CLARITA AMTRAK CONNECTION

A ribbon-cutting ceremony introduced the new Amtrak Thruway Motorcoach stop at the Newhall Transit Center. Cutting the ribbon is Santa Clarita Mayor JoAnne Darcy (second from right). With her are (left to right) Kim Kurowski, of the Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce; Duane Harte, Chairman of the Chamber's Redevelopment Committee; Laurene Weste, Santa Clarita Mayor Pro Tem; and Kathy Sanders, Amtrak Bus Coordinator. Daily Amtrak motorcoaches leave the Newhall Transit Center at 2:40 a.m., 7:50 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 1:50 p.m. and 3:50 p.m. to connect with northbound *San Joaquin* trains in Bakersfield. Return motorcoaches from southbound trains arrive at 1:35 p.m., 3:25 p.m., 6:00 p.m., 9:05 p.m. and 1:30 a.m.

